



Webinar on Covid19 and Open Science

11 May 2020, Islamabad Pakistan

Islamabad Statement for Action on Open Science

A webinar on Open Science, held on 11 May 2020 in Islamabad, was hosted by UNESCO Islamabad and the Pakistan Academy of Sciences. The event attracted more than 50 national and international stakeholders.

Under the main theme 'Covid19 and Open Science', experts, through an engendered, animated and constructive deliberation, recommended actionable areas for a Statement of Action. The Islamabad Statement for Action was adopted by the participants of the Webinar on Covid19 and Open Science on 11 May 2020.

The Islamabad Statement for Action reaffirms that, Open Science will bring together scientific research and innovation communities across the nation in strengthening the interface between science and society for evidence based policy actions for managing major challenges such as COVID-19. World wide, researchers and technology developers, engineers, academia, innovators, from private and public sectors, have been embracing the open science concept for making data and scientific knowledge more accessible, with the aim of leaving no one behind. Linkages between knowledge systems, the 'hard core science' and citizen science are critical for ensuring that 'no one is left behind' and are steering science to deliver solutions for major challenges facing society. In the case of Pakistan, open science can help bridge divides between advanced research institutes and emerging centres of excellence in academic and private sectors. It can also bring much needed emphasis on south-south cooperation for sustainable development through better accreditation of qualifications and peer reviewed research. The unique mobilization of the world's scientific community during COVID-19 is a testimony of increasing value of 'open science' without borders through political leadership. The implementation of open science approach enforces the basic human right of access to scientific knowledge.

Therefore, the Islamabad Statement for Action by the participants:

- Recalls the political commitment of the Government of Pakistan at the 30 March 2020 webinar *UNESCO Ministerial Forum for Open Science for COVID-19*, for sharing data, scientific knowledge and tools for solving the COVID pandemic affecting Pakistan and the world;
- Reaffirms that the pandemics extend beyond national and geographic borders and therefore, the value of scientific cooperation, convening the 'soft power' of science and science diplomacy is critical in ensuring widespread and timely data collection, and data sharing for evidence based policies;
- Expresses acknowledgment and gratitude to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, in particular the Pakistan Academy of Sciences for making excellent arrangements for success of the event;
- Expresses gratitude to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the support provided for this important initiative in Pakistan.

This statement calls for immediate (up to 1 year) and medium term (2 to 3 years) actions in open science as below:



Immediate Actions during Covid-19

- Formulate public and private research partnerships to redouble commitments to solve global health challenges such as COVID-19 by providing open access to data, knowledge and information;
- Strengthen Government of Pakistan to national STI ecosystems to support public–private partnerships for the design and upscaling of solutions and innovations for the benefit of all;
- Urges the UN Partners, Donors, Professional Bodies and Academic Institutions to establish an Open Science Platform to enable accessibility and sharing of scientific information aligned to national priorities and international best practices, and to develop effective tools for mainstreaming science for peace and sustainable development nationally and regionally;
- Calls on the UNESCO Science Family in Pakistan, Asia, and the Pacific Region to use its long-standing role promoting international scientific collaboration to boost Open Science in order to reduce the knowledge gaps.

Longer Term Actions – Post Covid-19

- All open science related partners are called upon to mainstream gender equality, in both the research process and research content, and take into account the ethical dimension, while promoting formal and informal science education;
- Sub-regional and regional science bodies are requested to take leadership to mobilize science for disaster risk reduction partnerships in for all stakeholders by reducing the knowledge gap, sharing values and promoting the spirit of ‘open science’;
- The UN system is urged to accelerate Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in the spirit of the General Assembly resolution A/RES/69/313, known as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.
- UNESCO and the Pakistan Academy of Sciences to work on multi-stakeholder collaboration between civil society, the private sector, the scientific community, United Nations entities and other stakeholders on open science, technology and innovation for the sustainable development goals by jointly establishing an online collaboration platform.